4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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Bestiality is an even rarer phenomenon than homosexuality. The only instances that were reported to me were, first, the curing of a venereal disease by intercourse with a donkey (6.61); and secondly, an adult herdsman who was seen standing on a rock and having relations with a female buffalo. The Basel Mission presbytery minutes for 1903 (written by Badagas) cite similar problems with a Badaga Christian teacher: "...last year he committed sin with a Toda girl...when he was on the way to Ooty to see his wife, who had gone there for her confinement. He also confessed that he had committed the same sin with his own country mare. This was all he confessed." (Basel Mission 1905: 305.)

3.5. These however are for Badagas aberrant forms of sexual expression; most experimentation takes the form of heterosexual intercourse. Its techniques will be described later (3.16), but here we will discuss only those situations in which young Badagas learn about sexuality. For purposes of clarity we can talk about affairs with lovers of the same community, extra-community liaisons, and situations in which parents used to arrange formal training for their adolescent children.

This last custom no longer prevails. It used to occur until some 30 years ago, the initiative to train a girl being taken by her own parents or another close relative; while a boy would usually seek his indoctrination in the arms of an elder brother's wife. In a typical case a man might tell his wife that their unmarried daughter was now old enough for sexual initiation. The wife would then speak to a married daughter about the matter, and she in turn would ask her own husband to offer the necessary practical training when an opportunity arose. In any event, it was supposed to be a relative, such as sister's husband — even if only in a classificatory sense — who should initiate a young girl. If a girl did not undergo such an initiation there was another opportunity for her immediately following her wedding. In this instance the person who would deflorate the bride was not the groom, but a more experienced man who could be gentle with her for the first night or two, and would be related to her as a classificatory husband's brother. The new husband would be absent on these occasions. This custom is no longer followed.

The obverse situation would involve a youth when aged about seventeen being given sexual training by a brother's wife who might be ten years or more his senior, and in some instances used to be

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
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picked for the task by the boy's own parents. This initiation of youths still seems to occur: some do it because an older man has advised them to, others because they love the woman, and others again because her own husband seems unable to satisfy her. The elder brother's wife is in fact the most accessible person for a youth's training or gratification: the two of them are often working together in the fields, and even if they do not live under the same roof a young man always has ready access to his brother's house. In earlier days relations with such a woman were particularly common when she was on the way from her husband's village to visit her father, when she was working outside the village, or when her husband went out to the fields to guard the crops against wild animals during the night. The husband might himself recommend that his younger brother stay with his wife, to assuage her fears of the Kurumba sorcerers. If the young man were seen leaving her house in the morning, no one would criticize him or think less of the woman.

Such formal sexual initiation has virtually ended, but adolescents still indulge in sexual play, some girls even being so aggressive as to way-lay boys in the woods for this purpose. There is no indication that such play occurs before the coming of puberty, and nowadays the fact that most children are attending school makes it less frequent. Since this kind of play most often occurs within the village community it takes place between consanguineal relatives, albeit distant ones. The play is of course conducted in secret, and without knowledge of the parents. The most adventurous kind of love assignment is one in which a youth hides inside the house of his beloved, by squatting inside the huge grain storage basket (*balla*) that some homes still have. Once everyone has gone to sleep he gets out for the rendezvous. Girls who are guarding a field from the birds are an ideal target for amorous adventures; and there it is usually a pair of girls who are approached by a pair of boys. Girls gathering wood in the forest may also be propositioned, but if they spend too much time away from the rest of the women their absence will be noticed. If it should happen that an adolescent girl becomes pregnant by a boy who is her agnate she cannot marry him, and her parents therefore try to arrange a marriage as quickly as possible with a male who is in the "correct" relationship to their daughter, preferably a cross-cousin. Generally a man does not want to marry a pregnant girl unless she is carrying his child.

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discover that an adolescent couple related in this acceptable way have become lovers, they try to persuade the two to marry. Should the girl become pregnant this pressure becomes very great.

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It is said that prior to this century parents would make a pair of cross-cousins sleep together in a separate room before they were married. This was so that they might feel certain about their sexual compatibility. If one of them did not in fact like the idea of marrying the other, such an encounter might be arranged on some other pretext, solely in the hope that one cross-cousin would seduce the other and a marriage would result. A girl might even receive instructions from her mother on how to accomplish this and perhaps would be left by her mother at the boy's house for a night or two. Such practices led to hasty marriages, but are no longer followed.

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A special kind of concubine-like relationship occurred until late in the nineteenth century. In those early times headmen had much more authority than subsequently, and local lore maintains that a headman visiting another village where he had to stay overnight would be offered his choice of the young village girls by the host headman. It was believed that a girl so favoured had special merit because of her physical connection with the prestigious visitor, and many men would therefore want to marry her. Although such a brief encounter was not expected to lead to a marriage with that headman, the chosen girl would normally have to be in an affinal relationship — i.e., tentative spouse — to the visitor.

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(*b*) Second in frequency and relative acceptability is a sexual encounter within a joint family. Only two such relationships bear discussion, but genuine incest will be noted below under (*g*).

(606) (607)

It is very rare for a man to have intercourse with his son's wife, even though a Badaga is generally more intimate in his relationship with her than more orthodox Hindus would be. What is common however is for a youth to have an affair with his elder brother's wife and doubtless in a few cases with a younger brother's wife. We have already pointed out (3.5) that an elder brother's wife may actually be called upon to provide a young man with his sexual initiation.

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(*c*) The Toreyas have the lowest status of any Badaga phratry, except perhaps for the recently formed Christian one. With a few minor exceptions Badaga marriage occurs only *within* each of the ten phratries. Nonetheless there was a tendency to "hypergamy," if we may call it that, in extra-marital affairs. Toreya girls, and even

B: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1982 AW50 Badaga AW50

121 The extensive analysis of Dravidian kinship over the past quarter of a century, especially at the hands of Dumont, Gough, Leach, and Yalman, has rarely been insistent on maintaining a distinction between rules and practices, and authors have tended to shift from one kind of data to the other whenever it suited their purpose, usually leaving the reader to assume that kinship practices are the rules in action. This may or may not be so in a particular case, but no identity between rules and practice should be presumed.

In Badaga kinship practice we certainly find that a great deal of accommodation of behaviour becomes necessary in daily life beyond the realm of kinship rules, since many of these have not been elaborated sufficiently to provide for all possible eventualities. Take, as an example, the ritual requirement 764 that a daughter (and in fact her husband) must make a gift of one embroidered shawl [121] at the funeral of each of her parents: that may be identified as a rule, one that can be stated by informants and is normally followed; but if there are several daughters, some married and others not, who presents that one shawl? Here we can find no rule to guide behaviour. In one instance that came to my attention, the several daughters were married to men of differential wealth, and they had to agree to split the costs of one shawl evenly between them. In this situation the poorest of the husbands would press for a lower contribution, and the wealthier husbands would have to agree to his figure and contribute the same amount themselves so as not to embarrass him; then they jointly got a cheap shawl.

In another case three brothers each had one wife. The eldest had three 764 sons and no daughters, the second three daughters, and the youngest one daughter. This meant that there would be four married daughters available to • 607 present—with their husbands' financial support—six embroidered shawls at the six funerals expected at the parental level. But before any of these deaths occurred, one daughter was divorced. The husbands of the three daughters remaining married agreed that each would make himself responsible for the purchase of two shawls, and then they designated which two funerals each 593 would contribute these to. Brothers sometimes "divide up" their living sisters in a similar way, each thereby making himself responsible for the ceremonial and other requirements of one, two or more sisters, whether 121 these women are married or not. In all of these examples, which I cull from recorded occurrences, there are no specific rules to guide behaviour in every eventuality. What we find instead is a rational attempt to compromise where necessary and fulfill kinship obligations where possible. Family enmities, premature deaths, lack of interest, divorce, absence, or poverty may all enter into the modification not only of kinship rules but of agreed-upon [593] arrangements such as we have just instanced. Egalitarianism between siblings of the same sex is certainly one guiding principle here, even if circumstances make it difficult or perhaps impossible to honour.

Many of the Badaga kinship "rules" are preferences rather than pres- 582 criptions. Take the "rule" of cross-cousin marriage, for example, which is [121] typical of Dravidian kinship systems. In the Badaga case a youth may marry